

Amendments to the Specification:

Please insert the following paragraphs after paragraph [0015]:

[0015A] Fig. 3A is a diagram showing a line card.

[0015B] Fig. 3B is a diagram showing a line card having one additional loopback.

[0015C] Fig. 3C is a diagram showing two line cards.

Please insert the following paragraphs after paragraph [0025]:

[0025A] Referring now to Fig. 3A, the platform of an exemplary embodiment includes a line card 40 including a layer two switching component 24 and a layer three switching component 22. The platform also includes a loopback 30 having both ends of the loopback terminate on the line card 40.

[0025B] Referring now to Fig. 3B, the platform of an exemplary embodiment includes a line card 40 having at least one additional physical loopback 30 connecting to another layer three switching component 22 on the line card 40, wherein redundancy for the layer three functionality is provided on the line card 40.

[0025C] Referring now to Fig. 3C, the platform of an exemplary embodiment includes at least one additional line card 40' comprising at least one additional layer two switching component 24' and at least one additional layer three switching component 22', wherein the at least one additional line card 40' provides redundancy.